

Supplement to the **2004 Michigan Hunting and Trapping Guide**

Regulations apply August 1, 2004 through July 31, 2005,
unless otherwise noted

Mourning Dove Hunting Season



Visit us on the Web at:
www.michigan.gov/dnr

Michigan Mourning Dove Season

Season Dates: September 10 – October 30, 2004

Hunting Hours: One-half hour before sunrise to sunset. See page 6.

Bag Limits: Daily Limit: 15, Possession Limit: 30

License Requirements: A valid Michigan small game hunting license (\$14 resident, \$65 nonresident) **AND** a Michigan dove stamp (\$2, license #239). All dove hunters must have a Harvest Information Program (HIP) endorsement printed on their license and carry proof of such enrollment.

Counties Open to Hunting: Berrien, Branch, Cass, Hillsdale, Lenawee and St. Joseph counties. All other counties are closed to mourning dove hunting. Dove hunting is permitted in state parks and recreation areas in the above counties in designated areas open to hunting. Non-toxic shot is required on the Schoonover Waterfowl Production Area in Lenawee County.

Dove Hunting Opportunities for Youth, the Elderly and Hunters with a Disability

Dove hunting offers youth, the elderly and hunters with a disability an opportunity to hunt before cold, inclement weather often prohibits participation. September, with its warm, comfortable days, is an ideal time for young and old to enjoy one of the first fall hunting seasons—the dove hunting season. Ease of participation and mentoring are important components of dove hunting. Such hunts can help beginning hunters develop interest, skills and firearm safety awareness.

To be a successful dove hunter, begin scouting potential areas in late August. Look for areas that have an abundance of small seeds or grain scattered on relatively bare ground, such as a recently harvested grain field. Observe the doves' daily routines. Doves fly from their roost to feeding and watering holes early in the morning. They then spend most of the day resting. In late afternoon, doves return to the fields to feed before returning to roost in the evening. So early morning and late afternoon are the best times to scout. Find areas doves are using and observe their patterns.

Ethical, Lawful and Safe Dove Hunting

Noted wildlife philosopher and scientist Aldo Leopold wrote: "A peculiar virtue in wildlife ethics is that the hunter ordinarily has no gallery to approve or disapprove of his conduct. Whatever his acts, they are dictated by his own conscience, rather than by the mob of onlookers. It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of this fact." Dove hunting is no exception to this time-honored hunting code. Shooting doves or any other game from power lines is unethical. It may result in damage to private property which is punishable by fines or possibly license revocation. Hunting ethics and state and federal laws demand that you make a reasonable effort to retrieve all doves you kill or cripple. Use of a dog may assist with retrieval and add

to your hunting experience. While hunting, always close gates you open, pick up your empty shot shells, do not litter and pick up litter of others. Ask the landowner if they need some help on the land.

Having good relationships with the landowners in your dove hunting areas are critical to a successful hunt. Always ask permission to hunt on private land. Trespassing is illegal. Once permission is granted, make sure you understand the landowner's agreement: Does the permission cover the entire farm and season? Does it include friends? Where should you park? Before you hunt, determine property line boundaries and identify any hunting hazards located on neighboring property. Remember, a 150-yard (450 feet) safety zone exists around all occupied buildings, houses, cabins, or any barn or other building used in a farm operation. Written permission of the owner or occupant of this safety zone is required before you can hunt or discharge a firearm within this area.

Be a safe hunter. Always treat every firearm as if it were loaded. Always point the gun muzzle in a safe direction. Always be sure of your target and beyond, and know the location of your hunting partners. Positively identify your target and wait for a good shot. Obey all wildlife laws and report violations by calling 800-292-7800.

Management Practices for Mourning Doves

The mourning dove is highly adaptable and can be found in many different habitats. Because doves favor weed seeds and waste grain, you'll often find them feeding in harvested grain fields, old grassy fields, along rural roadsides and on open ground where seeds are plentiful. You also can find doves in open woodlots and near the edges of larger tracts of forests. For nesting habitat, doves prefer single trees or shrubs surrounded by open land. Doves prefer to roost and rest on exposed tree limbs, utility wires or poles.

Mourning doves have three basic needs: food, cover and water. Doves prefer to feed on open ground. Since they eat a wide variety of seeds and grains, the presence of open or bare ground may be as important as the availability of food. Shredding or discing of crop residue provides a good source of bare ground. The fields you manage should be at least two acres or larger. The key ingredients for wildlife food plots for doves are their size and proximity to water and roosting sites.

Sunflowers are very beneficial plants for doves and many other species of birds. Sunflowers should be planted around corn planting time, but will die if ANY frost occurs once they are planted. Buckwheat and millet can be planted after the last spring frost and before mid-July with good wildlife food plot results. For fields with agricultural residue, light discing of stalks and remaining seed heads improves the field for mourning dove hunting.

For more information on wildlife and habitat management on private lands, visit the DNR Web site at www.michigan.gov/dnr. Specific details regarding agricultural practices and sunflower planting can be obtained from your local extension office.

How to Distinguish Mourning Doves from Other Birds



Mourning Dove

Mourning doves can be easily distinguished from other birds by their slender, streamlined pigeon-like form. Their similarity to pigeons is not surprising, since both the domestic feral pigeon (rock dove) and mourning dove belong to the same family of birds. Mourning doves are about 11-13 inches in size, with males slightly larger. Key features are the small head, pointed wings and the long tail that tapers to a point. These tails show large spots when the bird flies away. Look

for black spots on their upper wings, close to the body. Doves also have a large dark spot below the eye. The upper body feathers range in color from grayish-blue to grayish-brown. They have grayish-brown backs and buff-colored undersides. On bright days, doves in flight appear gray or gray-brown, but in poor light they look black.

Doves are extremely swift fliers averaging 30 to 40 miles per hour; when alarmed, they can reach 60 mph. They can quickly change their pace and altitude. Listen for the noticeable whistling sound produced by their steady, rapid wing-beat.

If you hunt doves, you must properly identify your target or not shoot. State and federal laws protect all non-hunted migratory birds. The killing of these birds is punishable by fine and/or jail, restitution and revocation of hunting privileges. Familiarize yourself with mourning



Kestrel



Killdeer

doves and other similar species before you begin hunting. By being careful you will avoid misidentification of similar birds, such as the kestrel (sparrow hawk) and the killdeer—often found in mourning dove habitat.

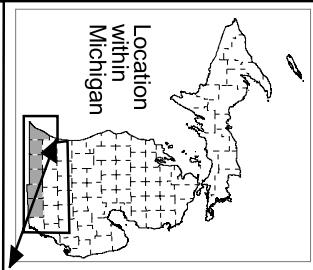
Male and female kestrels have different plumages, but both have gray heads with reddish crowns on top. Kestrels have two black marks on their white cheeks that resemble a handle-bar mustache with long sideburns. Males have blue-gray wings and a rusty back and tail. Females lack the bluish wings. In flight, the undersides of the kestrel's wings appear pale. Kestrels soar on flat wings, often with their tail fanned. When hunting, kestrels often chase their prey in a direct and rapid fashion, and can hover in one spot by rapidly beating their wings. Kestrels can be seen sitting on exposed perches, telephone lines or wires. Their voices are a high-pitched and excited "killy-killy-killy."

Killdeer are small, long-legged shorebirds found in open fields and pastures, often far from water. Look for their distinctive dark breast bands. Adults have two breast bands, while juveniles have only one. Killdeer also have a rusty-orange patch on the upper tail and lower back. Killdeer are seldom seen in large flocks. Listen for them to whistle their name "kill-deer, kill-deer, kill-deer" or a shortened "dee-ee."

Michigan Dove Season Regulations

- A Michigan small game license **AND** a Michigan dove stamp are needed to hunt mourning doves. **EXCEPTION:** A resident, resident's spouse and resident's children hunting doves on the enclosed farmlands where they live do not need a small game license.
- You **DO NOT** need to purchase the state or federal migratory bird stamp (e.g., "duck stamp") to hunt doves.
- It is illegal to hunt doves with more than one firearm per person.
- Shooting doves or any other game from power lines is unethical. It may result in damage to private property, which is punishable by fines or possible license revocation.
- All Michigan hunting regulations apply to the taking of mourning doves including safety zones, hunter orange, hunter safety requirements and general firearm rules. See the 2004 Michigan Hunting and Trapping Guide for further information.
- All joint state-federal migratory game bird regulations apply. No person shall take or attempt to take migratory game birds (including mourning doves):
 - With a firearm other than a 10 gauge or smaller shotgun capable of holding no more than three shells. Shotguns capable of holding more than three shells must be plugged with a one-piece filler, incapable of removal without disassembling the gun, so the total capacity of the shotgun does not exceed three shells.
 - Outside the hunting hours (pg. 6) for the county in which hunting.
 - By aid of baiting (placing millet, wheat or other feed to constitute a lure or enticement), or on or over any baited area where a person knows or reasonably should know the area is baited. Hunters should be aware that a baited area is considered to be baited for 10 days after the removal of bait.
- Wounded birds reduced to possession must be immediately killed and included in the daily bag. You must make a reasonable attempt to retrieve and include in your daily bag any killed or wounded bird.
- It is unlawful to transport any dressed or plucked dove unless one fully feathered wing is attached.
- It is unlawful to possess or transport more than the daily limit of mourning doves, whether tagged or not, at or between the place where taken and (1) your automobile or principal means of land transportation, or (2) your personal abode or temporary or transient place of lodging, or (3) a commercial preservation facility, or a post office or common carrier facility, whichever one is arrived at first.
- You may not put or leave doves at any place or in the custody of another person unless you tag the birds with your signature, address, number of birds identified by species, dates taken and current license or sportcard number.
- See the 2004-2005 Michigan Waterfowl Hunting Guide for other joint state-federal migratory game hunting regulations regarding shipping, importation, and prohibitions on the use of vehicles, single projectile loads and electronic calls.

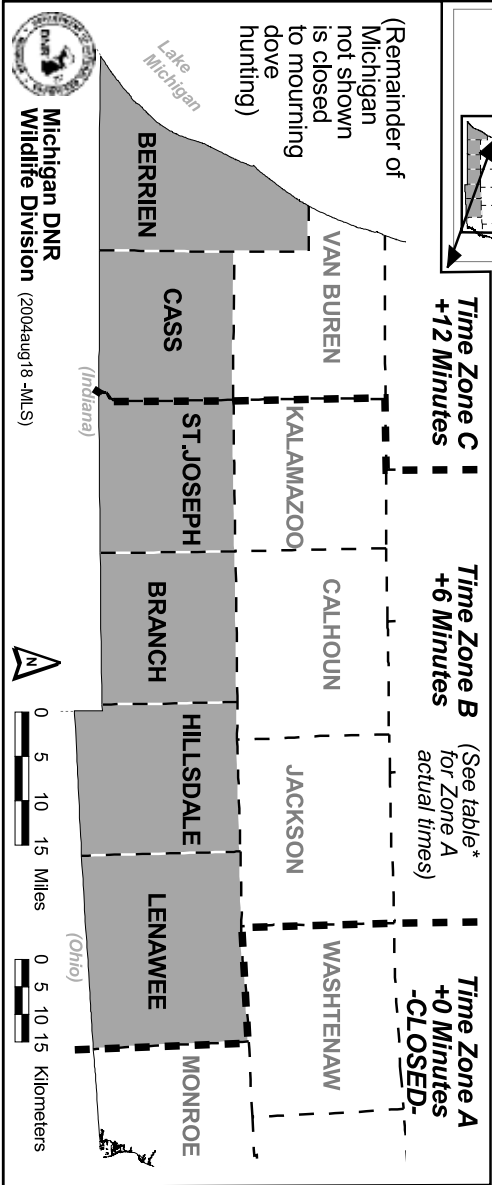
2004 Mourning Dove Management Unit



Legend

- Open to hunting (Berrien, Branch, Cass, Hillsdale, Lenawee, and St. Joseph)
- Closed (including all areas not shown)
- County Line
- Time Zone Boundary

*To determine the opening (a.m.) and closing (p.m.) time for any day in a hunting zone, add the minutes shown below to the times listed in the Zone A Hunting Hours Table.



Zone A. Hunting Hours Table
One-half hour before sunrise to sunset (adjusted for Daylight Savings Time).

2004	September		October	
Date	AM	PM	AM	PM
1			7:03	7:15
2			7:04	7:13
3			7:05	7:12
4			7:06	7:10
5			7:07	7:08
6			7:08	7:06
7			7:09	7:05
8			7:11	7:03
9			7:12	7:01
10	6:39	7:53	7:13	7:00
11	6:40	7:51	7:14	6:58
12	6:42	7:49	7:15	6:56
13	6:43	7:48	7:16	6:55
14	6:44	7:46	7:18	6:53
15	6:45	7:44	7:19	6:51
16	6:46	7:42	7:20	6:50
17	6:47	7:40	7:21	6:48
18	6:48	7:39	7:22	6:47
19	6:49	7:37	7:24	6:45
20	6:50	7:35	7:25	6:43
21	6:51	7:33	7:26	6:42
22	6:53	7:31	7:27	6:40
23	6:54	7:29	7:29	6:39
24	6:55	7:28	7:30	6:37
25	6:56	7:26	7:31	6:36
26	6:57	7:24	7:32	6:34
27	6:58	7:22	7:34	6:33
28	6:59	7:21	7:35	6:32
29	7:00	7:19	7:36	6:30
30	7:01	7:17	7:37	6:29